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VILLAGER'S RESENTMENT AGAINST REDS
GROWS IN NORTH KOREA

The following is a recent report received from Pyongan Pukto regarding the situation in North Korea.

The farmers, who at the beginning cooperated with the North Korean Reds when the land-reform program was first introduced, are now becoming deeply resentful as they gradually come to realize the true Communist intentions behind that program. While all other landowners were compelled to give up their lands, the leaders of the Labor Party, Farmers' League, Youth Corps, etc., kept their lands and remained rich. The so-called taxes-in-kind take away from the farmers 27 percent of their rice crop and 25 percent of other grain crops. In addition, all sorts of new taxes have been introduced, and invariably the farmers bear the largest share of the burden. The per-capita labor contribution of 30 days a year for public construction works demanded by the state is compulsory. Farmers are conscripted to work on river dikes and irrigation works, as well as in the factories, mines, etc.

In Pyongan Pukto, in one year, 89 million won were spent and 635,000 persons were put to work on road construction. Many farmers greatly resent such programs imposed by the Red government. Furthermore, the steady rise in prices of daily necessities, while the values of farm produce, particularly rice, remains static, makes farm life increasingly difficult. Consequently, in villages where electricity is available, the farmers clandestinely listen to the radio broadcasts from South Korea and earnestly long for the freedom of the south.

The farmers in such localities as Ch'oson, Ch'angsong, and Pyoktong are desperately poor. In these areas it is not uncommon to find one head of cattle and 1,000 won representing the entire wealth of a village. Consequently, many farmers are deserting the villages, only to find themselves forced into the slave mines or compulsory labor groups.

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